CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY

OF THE

First Presbyterian Church

OF

CALDWELL, N. J.

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Memorial exercises on the
occasion of the Centennial

THEOLOGICAL SE

MEMORIAL EXERCISES

ON THE OCCASION OF THE

Centennial Anniversary

OF THE

First Presbyterian Church,

OF CALDWELL, N. J.,

Wednesday, December 3, 1884.

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The Signification and Purpose of Sacred Memorials,

A DISCOURSE

(ABRIDGED)

ON THE OCCASION OF THE CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY OF THE CALDWELL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

BY THE PASTOR,

REV. C. T. BERRY.

DISCOURSE.

. . "When your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean ye by these stones? Then ye shall answer them, That the waters of Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD; when it passed over Jordan, the waters of Jordan were cut off: and these stones shall be for a memorial unto the children of Israel for ever. For the LORD your God dried up the waters of Jordan from before you, until ye were passed over, as the LORD your God did to the Red Sea, which he dried up from before us, until we were gone over. That all the people of the earth might know the hand of the LORD, that it is mighty: that ye might fear the LORD your God for ever.—*Joshua IV.* 6, 7, 23, 24.

IF it had not already been done, I should embrace the splendid opportunity which this centennial anniversary furnishes, to bring before you the fullest history of this church which can now be written.

Fourteen years ago it was my privilege to present you with the record of eighty-six years of the now completed century of your ecclesiastical life.

In the absence, therefore, of necessity to review again in detail the items of our church's history, I have found what appears to me a suitable theme for this interesting occasion in the text announced.

As the reading of the Scripture lesson placed before us the connection of these words, we may turn directly to the subject which they suggest, viz.: *The Signification and Purpose of Sacred Memorials.*

The divine wisdom plainly appears in this command to observe a then already customary form of commemoration. It met that human weakness through which it happens that the most sacred impressions are prone to die. Moreover, it harmonized with God's usual methods hitherto. His bow

in the cloud was intended as a sign and pledge of his faithfulness. The Sabbath was ordained to quicken in men the sense of their divine relations, and their longing for the "rest that remaineth." So the passover and other kindred feasts were designed for memorials; and when Christ said to his disciples, "Do this in remembrance of me," he asserted the very same principle. Events, the most illustrious in this care-and-pleasure-crowded world, are easily forgotten.

Man's Creator has therefore often emphasized the need of enshrining their remembrance in some permanent form, and as a matter of fact, the example before us has entered into the traditions and practices of almost every nation on the face of the earth.

I. I remark, *in the first place*, that from the teaching of the Scriptures it seems to be eminently fitting to commemorate in some expressive form the good things God has done for us.

The Old Testament is crowded with the proofs of this practice; such as circumcision, the memorial of God's covenant with Abraham; the stone set up at Bethel, the memorial of Jacob's vision; the passover, the memorial of deliverance from Egypt; the Altar at Rephidim, inscribed "The Lord, my Banner;" the manna preserved in the Ark, the memorial of Israel's miraculous food-supply in the wilderness; the Gideon altar at Ophrah; the Ebenezer stone set up by Samuel, the memorial of victory over the Philistines; the annual feasts in commemoration of national deliverances, such as the feast of Purim, the memorial of the Jews' escape from the exterminating designs of Haman. And that the practice is not foreign to the New Testament is evident from the sanction which our Lord lent to it in the institution of the eucharist, and the change of the Jewish Sabbath to the Christian Sunday, the weekly memorial of Christ's resurrection.

No one, certainly, can condemn the working of the same principle in the erection of memorial churches, and other

means of commemorating God's great mercies, or the lives of good men. It will hardly be questioned that the legitimate tendency of such memorials is to keep alive, if not to foster the spirit of piety and gratitude.

It is of particular value to the young, as we see even under all its perversions in the Church of Rome. The abstract facts of history make but a faint impression upon the young, while a stately structure or a towering monument attracts their attention at once. According to an old heathen proverb, "Things received through the avenue of hearing impress the mind far more feebly than those which are submitted to us through the medium of sight." In the case now before us the twelve-stone sign was to be a stimulus to spiritual apprehension, and a help to faith. Like all such memorials it had a two-fold aspect. While it was to keep alive precious memories, and awaken bright anticipations, it linked the spiritual past with the spiritual future. It symbolized that there was ever over successive generations the same God, with His loving regard and delivering power—that past experiences of grace were pledges of unfailing help in the emergencies yet to come. Is it not an inference, absolutely fair, that God would have *us* take special measures to remember *our* mercies? Do we not all know right well that our disappointments and misfortunes need no memorial stones, while the memory of God's mercies is very liable to be overborne by the persistent clamor of life's ills? Do we not owe it to ourselves and our Divine benefactor to stimulate our souls, to "Bless the Lord and forget not [any of] all his benefits?" Should we not cherish such a wholesome, gracious memory, cultivating it like the garden of the Lord; keeping out all noisome weeds and noxious growths, that the flowers of devout gratitude and joyful service may flourish in fullest fragrance and beauty?

If we are to "keep our hearts with all diligence," then certainly this department of the work may not be neglected.

But our duty does not rest here. Remembrance for our own sakes is not enough. Just as the memorial of the Lord's

Supper is not only designed to recall to those acquainted with it, but to proclaim to those ignorant of it, the great deliverance wrought on Calvary, and the infinite love that lay behind the cross, so these memorial stones to commemorate the miracle of Jordan's dry crossing were pre-eminently for the sake of succeeding generations. They were to *report to others*, as well as to recall to the Israelites of *that* day, the mercies of God. They were for a perpetual publication of God's gracious dealings with his people. As Bunyan would say, they were set up "for the encouragement of pilgrims." The Israelites were expressly forbidden to "hide God's mercies in their hearts." They were to tell them to the generations following.

So in a sin-sick world, the Christian, the church, must tell of hopes of heaven and the way to reach that blessed abode. Christ, when on earth, required mercies received to be mercies related for others' good, except perhaps where thoughtless tattle would be an injury. Those whom He leads across the Jordan of condemnation into his promised rest of pardon and acceptance he bids to erect their memorial and join the rest of Israel in testifying to the greatness of their Saviour. Moreover, memorials are to be as enduring as possible. The one at Gilgal was built of stones, and, it is said as a matter of fact, remained till probably some centuries after the destruction of Jerusalem. And through all those generations that memorial served to elevate and inspire men by its blessed memories. So Christian, so church memorials should not be unsubstantial, transient. Those who inherit much from Christ should transmit much to others, who may thereby become His disciples. If we have been blessed by ancestral testimony, let us also likewise bless our descendants. Let our testimony to divine grace be strong, clear, decisive—if it may be, massive. Let it be serious work, enlisting our very souls.

II. I remark, secondly, That sacred memorials are a testimony that help and strength are to be found in the ordinances of religion.

When the feet of the appointed priests touched the brink of the waters, the passageway across the tumultuous stream was formed—the upper waters massed themselves above, and the lower waters fled away. God has appointed his ministry and the services of his sanctuary. It is (through grace divine) one of the privileges of the Christian ministry of the new covenant, as of the priests at the command of the Jesus of the old covenant, that as their feet touch the swelling waters of on-rolling worldliness these subside, they flee away, at least when at the root of the individual life there lies the spark, even though almost quenched, of faith.

The priests in the case now in our view, we are told, "stood firm," without faltering or wavering, and the miracle of divided waters was performed. Just at this point it was that the first memorial was afterward erected, commemorative alike of the fidelity of the priests and the commencement of the miracle. Many are the faithful servants of God in the ministry, who have, like these priests of old, felt their responsibility in the service of God in His church, and who, without fainting by the way, have unshrinkingly led the sacramental hosts of God's elect, unfaltering in their work of "earnestly contending for the faith once delivered to the saints," whose trumpet in promoting the spread of the Gospel gave no uncertain sound. And many are the memorials, not only of costly shafts in celebrated cemeteries, but far, far better, in large, and established, and sanctified church constituencies, and in grand and enduring church edifices, which both have long borne eloquent testimony to the faithful instruction, and the wise and successful guidance by these consecrated servants of Christ, of pilgrims to the celestial city, who, as shining stars in the crown of their rejoicing, shall constitute *everlasting* memorials in the unveiled presence of the ever-living God.

III. I remark again, That sacred memorials are a testimony that spiritual barriers are efficient against all assailing forces.

Thus runs the narrative: "And the priests that bare the

ark of the covenant of the Lord stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground until all the people were clean passed over Jordan." For the time being that restless river was, by the presence of the ark, dammed as no civil engineer could have done it. The swift-piling waters could not break it or find even a leak in it. There was no struggling with the water; none were carried down the stream; there were no hair-breadth escapes; none were left behind; all got safely across. And the memorial which was built to commemorate this event was equally, aye, chiefly, a testimonial that nothing can overcome purely spiritual barriers. Many have been the confident prophecies to the contrary, and many the Elis that have trembled for the ark of God's truth. At times it has indeed seemed but a slender barrier to oppose to the rushing and roaring river of error bearing mightily down upon it. Science has been so arrogant and captious; chronology so very sure; metaphysics so proudly disputatious; and, withal, error so agreeable to the natural man, that it has seemed sometimes as if the current were too swift to be withstood. But the dashing Jordans of all the manifold philosophies and all the multiform heresies have threatened God's truth in vain; and to-day all over the governing nations of the world the sacred memorials of Christian churches with their heaven-pointing spires in cities and towns and even infant villages attest the fact that the simple ark of God's truth is sufficient to withstand the most violent and virulent opposition. "The weakness of God is stronger than men."

IV. I remark, fourthly, That sacred memorials of past experiences should have fruitage in large plans for the future.

The first religious act of the Israelites after crossing the Jordan was the erection of their memorial about two miles from the river. And we read, "they went over prepared for war." How bitter and bloody and victorious their succeeding conflicts were, the sacred narrative gives us full account. As an elemental factor in their success, who shall measure the

stimulating value of that Gilgal memorial, testifying, as in mute eloquence it ever did, of divine help in great emergencies. Would they not naturally reason that He who had divided the waters of the Red Sea, who had daily strewed bread for them over the barren wilderness, and who had now held back the impetuous Jordan from opposing their onward way, would still honor their Ebenezer, and enable them to subdue and possess the entire land to which He had brought them? Was not the chief intent of the memorial to encourage them to far larger things, as the people of God, for the glory of Him who had chosen them?

And so, as the Church of Christ goes on its way, erecting as it does ever and anon its memorial of divine interposition, should it not fetch courage from its monumental past to widen the scope of its future undertakings? The Christian church cannot expect exemption from conflict. The great Captain declared that He came "not to send peace, but a sword." Individually, as our forefathers, we have to "fight the good fight of faith." And collectively, as a Christian church, we have to "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints." We have not been ancestrally led into what may comparatively be called a "Land of Promise" to be idle. Rather do enlarged opportunities demand more illustrious results. Inaction now would be treason. Not repasts of milk and honey is as yet our destiny; but earnest resistance both to the evil in our own hearts, and then to the confederated evils of society, is the divine allotment. And for this, as we erect our centennial memorial, let us pass over the boundary line between the two centuries, as the Israelites passed over the dividing and divided Jordan, "prepared," *i. e.*, literally "disencumbered." Let us resolve to put aside, as did they, the impediments to activity. Whatever may lie in our habits, our social customs, our recreations, our business relations, or even our affectional ties, that may fetter us in the conflict with the opposing forces of evil, let us resolutely give up. "Let us lay aside every weight and every

easily besetting sin," and with united front, as we remember what great things the Lord hath done for us, meet—and, trusting in our fathers' God, meet to *vanquish*—the serried ranks of evil that interpose to prevent the beneficent march of the church of the ever-living God to world-saving victory.

One hundred years ago last Wednesday "The First Presbyterian Church of Horse Neck" was organized, with a constituency of forty members, viz.: eighteen men and twenty-two women. The day of the week was Friday. Let those who look upon Friday as an unlucky day on which to begin an undertaking remember how their forefathers regarded it.

(For the precise record of the formal commencement of your ecclesiastical existence see "Hist. Survey," p. 17. For the conditions out of which it took origin see same "Survey," pp. 13, 14, 15, 16.)

The first pastor of the church was the Rev. Stephen Grover. (See "Hist. Sur.," p. 22.) Under Mr. Grover's labor, though no special awakening occurred for eight years, yet considerable additions, to the number of sixty-eight, were made from time to time to the communion of the church; while the regular and faithful ministrations of the Gospel and its ordinances produced a decidedly happy reformation in general manners and morals.

In January, 1792, a church, at an estimated cost of $3,000, was projected by the earnest and faithful pastor. This, after four years of great labor and sacrifice and patience, and substantial assistance from eleven contiguous parishes, was completed, and dedicated April 6, 1796. (See "Hist. Survey," pp. 27, 28.) This year was besides memorable for the commencement of a powerful work of grace, which continued through half of the following year, and resulted in the addition of one hundred and sixty-six souls in all to the church. This was surpassed, however, in the year 1808, when one hundred and fifty-two at the June communion were received at one time. (See "Hist. Survey," pp. 27, 28, 29.) In addition to these two large revivals Mr. Grover was privileged to enjoy

two others—one in 1814, fruiting in sixty-one conversions, and one in 1825, yielding thirty-three additions to the church.

In the years 1826–7 the Rev. Robert Campfield spent his two seminary vacations here in assisting Mr. Grover, and after graduating spent six months likewise, from July, 1828, to January, 1829. While the church seems to have been considerably awakened under his labors there are no records of any special ingatherings.

In May, 1830, the Rev. Baker Johnson was settled as assistant pastor, and continued here three years. There were two revivals under his ministry, one which added thirty-seven to the church roll, and the other forty-two. In all ninety-seven joined under his ministry.

In October, 1833, after Mr. Johnson's departure, Mr. Grover, in his seventy-sixth year, and after having served the church forty-six years, was honorably retired upon a fixed annuity, and, greatly beloved and venerated, deceased in a little less than three years thereafter.

The next pastorate was that of the Rev. Mr. Cleveland, which continued six years and a half from May, 1834. After three years Mr. Cleveland called in the assistance of an evangelist, a Mr. Clark, who labored here several weeks, the result of whose efforts was the addition of seventy-five to the church roll. During Mr. Cleveland's ministry ninety-seven in all were received into the church.

The next pastor was the Rev. Mr. Tuttle, whose settlement continued eight years and a half, from the spring of 1841 to the fall of 1849. Under his genial, gentle, yet efficient ministry, occurred two normal revivals, in which respectively thirty and forty-four hopeful conversions took place. In all ninety were added to the church during his ministry.

The fifth pastor was the Rev. Dr. Sprague, whose term of service extended through nineteen years, from January, 1850, to January, 1869. He came as a pronounced revivalist, and several times during his pastorate, called in to his help such revival evangelists as the Revs. Mr. Underwood, O.

Parker, and E. P. Hammond. He was permitted to enjoy eight seasons of ingathering, ranging in numbers from nineteen to seventy, in all three hundred and thirteen. In four of the remaining years he received a total of thirty-three, and in the other seven a total of only four; in five of these there being no additions whatever.

My own ministry dates back sixteen years ago next spring. During that time it has been my joy to welcome two hundred and forty-one upon confession into the communion of the church, and one hundred and eight by letter. During these years, the church has, in the use of no extraneous aid, enjoyed four special effusions of the spirit, the resulting ingatherings ranging from eighteen to seventy-three; the latter being the largest number received at any one time since the revival of 1808 under Mr. Grover.

The church has received in all 2,144 members upon confession of faith during the century; 1,103 as the result of twenty-one revivals, and 1,041 under the customary means of grace. (Since Mr. Grover's pastorate two hundred and thirty-one have been received by letter, nearly one-half of these during my own ministry; this is a significant fact, as to the recent trend of outside population.)

So much only by way of historic review. What of it in connection with the preceding part of the discourse? I answer: this church's history has been one of conspicuous blessings and consequent memorials.

When your forefathers lived isolated, in rude log huts, on mountain paths, by springs, or anywhere that some trifling advantage presented itself, with scarcely one dwelling among them all that could keep out an ordinary storm, and the land was so densely covered with timber that it was a struggle to provide even the simplest means of subsistence, the God-fearing portion of them gave themselves in serious attention to matters of religion.

This, like the prayers of the centurion, Cornelius, came up as a "memorial" before God, and He thereupon inclined to

come unto them godly men from neighboring churches to break unto them the bread of life.

The church-that-was-to-be then erected its next memorial by securing the parsonage lands for the purpose, as expressly stated, to "promote the public worship of Almighty God, by making decent provision for the support of a minister of the Gospel, and of erecting a convenient house for public worship."

This was followed by the building of the manse. Upon this memorial, even while yet unfinished, God poured out his further blessing in a very considerable revival of religion.

This again your pious ancestors followed by organizing themselves into a church. Upon this came and continued the baptism of heavenly impulses, until, in response, your forefathers called and settled over them a man of God for a pastor. This memorial God blessed in the ingathering of sixty-eight souls, and the overcrowding of their humble place of worship. They thereupon enlarged their memorial by the erection of a church, which for those times was indeed large and honorworthy. Immediately thereafter God's responsive blessing came in great power, adding within two years nearly two hundred to the communion of the church.

Then continued fidelity in His worship as a memorial of devout gratitude, God blessed for ten years with the saving of seventy souls more, emphasizing the closing of that epoch by the never-to-be-forgotten revival of 1808, which added 152 at one time to the church's strength, crowding the capacity of the church edifice with thankful and grace-developed worshipers, who thus continued their memorials to the divine goodness.

In six years the Great Head of the church again sent his copious blessing in a large and gracious revival. Then from time to time churches began to build in adjacent neighborhoods, deriving of course from this ecclesiastical center their inspiration, as also much of their strength. And so, reciprocal blessings and memorials, memorials and blessings which

there is not time to particularize, continued, during successive pastorates till twelve years ago, the 29th of November, 1872, when God furnished you the opportunity to undertake yet larger things, in the removal by fire of your time-honored and beloved sanctuary, whose smouldering ruins drew honest tears from many eyes.

Enlarging the memorial of your faith, and again crowning it "Ebenezer,"—"hitherto hath the Lord helped us,"—you confidently went forward, and ere long this beautiful, substantial, and capacious structure up-sprang from the ashes of the first.

But unforeseen obstacles arose, which, though you have manfully coped with them, find this second structure, nine years after its completion, unliberated from debt, and undedicated to God. What time more opportune, dear friends, for me as your pastor, recalling to your notice, your past enviable history, to urge you, under its stimulating and inspiriting lessons, as you tread upon the threshold of a new century, to imitate the apostle Paul, and "thank God and take courage." If God has so faithfully guided you in the past, through the Red Sea of the beginnings of your church history, through the wilderness of your protracted and toilsome journeyings, and across the swift and swollen Jordan of your recent emergencies, set up, rather, complete this *your* memorial and then press on to the victories, that, as a valiant church, are yet awaiting your faithful fighting.

In the absence of earlier data, compare the past fifteen years alone with the feeble beginnings of this church's history, and "What hath God wrought?" Your benevolent contributions for the period named, without the unrecorded ones, are just about a round $15,000, while your contributions for church purposes for the same time are a trifle over $100,000, besides $10,000 realized from the sale of land.

Is not He, who enabled you to begin and rear this already renowned church-building as a suitable advance in "memorial" raising upon the deeds of a century past, and which is

far, far more within the scope of your means than the dear old wooden church was within the reach of your forefathers, is not He waiting for you, as Paul wrote to the Corinthians, to "*complete* the doing also," "that as there was the readiness to will, there may be the *completion* also out of your ability"? Is there a more suitable way to remember Him, who "giveth you the *power* to get wealth"? Is it not eminently fitting in this opening of your second century to commemorate in *this* expressive form your gratitude for the overflowing abundance of the divine mercies towards you hitherto?

What an important page in your church history does it now lie within your province to contribute! What an illustrious time is now yours to consummate your memorial! It is yours to send it down to history for the successive generations of your children to read with unmixed reverence for your memories and delight in your deeds, that under the stimulus of a review of your manifold mercies for a completed century you gratefully and piously released your church from the thrall of its indebtedness that it might enter with freedom and gladness upon a second century of far more liberal and glorious achievement than that which makes its past to-day so renowned.

At one time it looked as if God were not going to require any sacrifice of this generation in the line of church erection. But since He *has* blessed you with the opportunity for its experience—and burden-bearing has great benefits—I entreat you furnish to your children and to theirs, the evidence of your consecration to Christ and your testimony to the help and strength that are to be found in the preserved ordinances of religion, which would be shown by your arising and breaking off the church's financial fetters.

Nor am I asking anything impossible. There is no want of ability. Is it not, then, idle to suffer the leeches of interest to suck any more of the life-blood of the principal? Waiting for the advent of the railroad has been the most delusive *ignis fatuus*. Is it worth while to be lured on any longer by such

a siren? Is it economy by postponing the debt-payment to pay it twice over? It is staggering to think how much money has been devoured already by the hungry and insatiable wolf of interest. Is it not wiser to dispatch the ravenous animal altogether?

It is to me a heavy drawback from the anticipated enjoyment of this long-anticipated day not to be able to unfold to your view the cancelled mortgage which so oppressively blankets this church. Nor could I have spoken otherwise than I have without being recreant to you, to myself, to the memory of your ancestors, to the interests of the church here and at large, and to the Great Head of the church, the Lord Jesus Christ. I beg of you now, as you raise the new banner of your second century's battling for the Lord, to inscribe upon it in clear and conspicuous lettering, "For the sake of our forefathers' Saviour; for the sake of our own dear Lord; for the sake of our children's Redeemer, our first and fully recognized duty is—and with God's help we will meet it at once—to free our beautiful Zion from its monetary bondage." Trusting in Him who led his people through the Red Sea, and the wilderness, and the Jordan, soon may we hear, as a voice from heaven, "The day of deliverance draweth nigh," aye, the actual shout of victory over the vanquished demon of debt.

Than this there is now no memorial so clamorous for erection. Then—and methinks I see already the dawn of the glorious day—then will we gather in massy numbers and with consecrated and joy-swollen hearts unreservedly dedicate this goodly structure to the worship of the triune God. Then, too, as did our fathers eighty-eight years ago, shall we bear our accentuated testimony to the unpriced value of unhampered church privileges to heaven-bent pilgrims—our testimony to the necessity and efficacy of spiritual barriers, of which church structures are the symbols, against the Jordanic forces of evil. Then shall we prove ourselves worthy inheritors of the ancestral, prayer-blessed legacy which has been bequeathed to us, and also fitly recognize the lesson, that

increased opportunities and privileges bring with them enhanced responsibilities; that we mean by our memorial greater things for times to come. So shall we, as did our fathers, testify our faith in the efficiency of this Christ-owned, Spirit-blest church to promote the prosperity of secular industries, the happiness of families, the peace and security of society, and the salvation of souls. So, if God's providence shall preserve from elemental destruction this stately pile, constructed like the Gilgal memorial, of enduring stones, shall, long after we have been laid to our final rest, be proclaimed, as children's children continue to ask, "What meant our fathers by these goodly stones?" the answer, They meant chiefly to testify their loyalty to God, and assert the hope, that as He alone held the first place in their hearts, as He had also done in the hearts of *their* fathers, so He would likewise in yours. They meant to testify their loyalty to the material church of Christ—the birth-place of souls—which the former church had been to their fathers and to them, and which they fervently prayed this second temple might become to you, even the gate of heaven. They meant to testify their deep and devout gratitude to the Great Head of the church, for all His distinguishing and manifold mercies to their own and the preceding generations, and to incite you, their children, to avail yourselves of the impetus given by your fathers to the great work of God in this church of such singularly hallowed memories, and to urge it yet more vigorously forward than did they, and, ever broadening the scope of your faith, ever increasing the fervor of your prayers and the eagerness of your zeal, to inscribe upon your banners, "The whole township of Caldwell for Christ." With an animating history; with the stimulating promises of a covenant-keeping God, whose word is that He will be with the children as He has been with their fathers; with the assured aid of an ever-present Redeemer, to whom His church stands in the near and dear relation of bride; and with the life-giving influences of the Holy Spirit ever at hand, I close with the inquiry,

Shall we, or shall we not, signalize the entrance upon the second century of our ecclesiastical existence with the suggested and suitable memorial of our beloved Zion's emancipation from the slavery of enshackling debt ?

AFTERNOON SESSION.

In the afternoon a very extensive and interesting programme was followed. After "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name," the vast congregation was led in a fervent and appropriate prayer by the oldest member of the session, Mr. Wm. Lane, in his 81st year. A quartette then rendered Holbrook's "Thou, who art enthroned on High," after which a poem was read by Mr. C. M. Harrison on the history and struggles of the founders of the church. Interesting communications were presented from Lewis C. Grover, Esq., Rev. Robert B. Campfield, Rev. I. N. Sprague, D. D., a former pastor, Rev. William N. Cleveland, whose father occupied the pastorate from 1834 to 1840. A review of the inner life of the church from the pen of a lady connected with the church, was received with much pleasure. A brief and genial address of congratulation from the Rev. Mr. Thomas, pastor of the Baptist Church, followed. Mr. A. A. Raven, of Brooklyn, made the closing address.

A letter was read as follows from President-elect Cleveland:

EXECUTIVE MANSION, ALBANY, DEC. 5, 1884.

REV. C. T. BERRY, *Dear Sir:* I have your letter, informing me that on the 7th of the present month the centennial of the church at Caldwell, in which my father once preached, will be celebrated. Though I remember almost nothing of the village where I spent a few very early days, I can sincerely say that the spot is dear to me—as the place of his birth should be dear to every man. The name brings to mind scenes in the family circle, when the incidents of Caldwell life were recalled and dwelt upon with pleasure and gratitude. And when I remember that there my sainted

parents had their home, and there my godly father wrought and struggled in his Heavenly Father's mission, the place to me seems hallowed and sacred. The Caldwell church, built up and prospered by the labors of such pious and devoted men as have been its pastors, has much in its centennial year to chasten and consecrate its history. In the days to come, may it always remain true and steadfast in the work committed to its charge, faithfully teaching the pure doctrine of the gospel, and avoiding all malice and uncharitableness. Yours very truly,

GROVER CLEVELAND.

Of the addresses, two are reproduced in the following pages. The services had begun at 2.30 o'clock, and as it was now growing dark, the great assemblage, after a brief exhortation by the pastor and singing the Doxology, "Praise God, from whom all blessings flow," were dismissed with the benediction.

A POEM

DESCRIPTIVE OF THE EARLY SETTLERS WHO BECAME THE FOUNDERS OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CALDWELL.

BY C. M. HARRISON, A. M.

POEM.

CHURCH of the highland plain, queen in unique
And beauteous design, fair child of art,
Our village pride, to thee, to-day, we turn,
And in the lines of thy perspective, read
The lessons of the far-off times!

Our church and plain, so wedded in the past,
On this occasion, must their themes conjoin.
Then let us gather up again the threads
Of hardships, perils past, and tell, once more,
The story of one hundred fifty years
Or more ago. For richly blest are we
In church, and in her history, replete
With tender memories of the ancient years,
And blest by nature in our rare plateau,
Its skirting hills, long undulating slopes,
And clear, bright vistas opening to the west.
What grandeur here have we! Beyond outspread,
What bright and varied scenery greets the view!
Below, Passaic's valley, studded o'er
With rustic homes, and meadows large and fair,
Half hid from view by intervening groves.
And far to northward still, 'mid Pompton's mines,
Where Mount Wynockie* marks the hour of noon,
Behold again a matchless landscape scene;
While past the hills that skirt Passaic's stream,

*This mountain is due north from Caldwell, and is often used as a noon mark by the workmen in the fields.

The morning sun, on Boonton's eastern slope,
Reveals the mountain town in flashing light,
A blaze of morning glory. The rapt eye
Long lingers 'mid the changeful shades and lights
That play in splendor 'mong the rifted hills
Of Morris; thence turning southward still, scans
The clear, blue hights, that circle round the plains
Beyond historic Morristown.

On this plateau, so rich in varied scenes,
Our ancestry their homes and fortunes sought.
Here on the hills and slopes and village plain,
Beside the gushing springs and rippling streams
Devotedly their rude log cabins built.
Strong, earnest men were they, scarce swayed by doubt,
But ever trustful of their strength and plans;
And for their rough and rugged times, they were,
In purpose, wisdom, faith, full well equipped.
They were a type of knightly pioneers,
Disdaining gain by dint of force or fraud,
Who held the aborigines the lords
Of these fair lands. From Loantique, Taphow,
And Manshun, Indian Kings, their title came.
Long after, Tischewomakin, Shaphoe,
Quiehtoe, Yaupis, Indian princes true,
Their deed* confirmed. Our fathers bought from these,
And held the red men's title sacred and secure.
But there were letters patent from the Crown,
Then held by divers lords imperious,
Who, boastful of proprietary rights,
Harassed the yeomen and their lands enjoined.
Confusions and revolt quick following,
The titled landlords had recourse to law.
With costly litigation did they vex
The rustic holders, blighting well laid plans,
And robbing fields of careful toil and tilth.

*The original deed was destroyed by the burning of Mr. Jonathan Pierson's dwelling, 1744.

The doughty yeomen, who, in faith had bought
Their lands from those to whom the laws of right
Had given just possession, held the claims
So vaguely formulated by the king,
As void, denying that discovery
Gave right to sell the soil. With dogged will
Our fathers battled for their homes and lands;
For these had they not bought and much improved?
To yield them were to give from out their lives
Long years of anxious care. Demanding right,
They clamored, jails broke open, laws defied,
And, for a season, held the lords at bay.

At last, the long and costly suit was closed,
And judgments entered 'gainst their well-earned fields.
To these hard mandates they were forced to yield,
And buy anew, against their sense of right,
Their holdings from the agents of the king.

Those early years with pain for them were rife.
Hard was their lot in battling forest wilds;
But resolute their minds and strong their limbs.
The virgin forests fell beneath their blows,
And cumbrous boulders yielded to their might.
Their widening, wood-girt fields kind nature blessed,
And bounteous crops their homely garners filled.
Plain, honest thrift their rustic comforts won,
While trust in God sublimed their stubborn tasks.

Slight records have they left us of their lives.
Tradition, blending the few scattered facts
With simple legends, weaves the meagre web
Of ancient rustic industry and faith,
Unsullied honors and abiding loves.
Full fifty years before the great event,
We gather here this day to celebrate,
The struggling settlers toiled amid these hills.
Young Sanders was among the first to come,
And by the village brooklet built his hut.

His thrift was slow, but emigration's tide,
Then westward setting, brought him traffic's chance.
So briskly to his wish, the home of logs
Gave place to Sander's Inn, "The Old Stone Fort."
Here squatters gathered, resting from the chase,
And village gossip, with abuse of worth,
The long, weird winter nights were wont to fill.
E'en this old friend our charity invokes.
'Twas oft the church and inn stood side by side;
For rigid churchmen, in those early days,
Would tipple with their neighbors, bandy jests,
With badinage would e'en their pastors greet,
Who like the rest, sometimes, their glass would sip.

But Sanders brought a friend, unlike himself,
A man of larger brain and keener sense,
Who, wrestling with the forests, won fair fields;
Who, loving love and truth, the right maintained.
In him, our first much honored pioneer,
Religion found a dauntless advocate.
To Thomas Gould we give full meed of praise,
For he was princely in his deeds and gifts.
His peers came later, brave and true as he.
With him through hope and fear, and loss and gain,
The infant church, with tireless care, they nursed.
In Samuel Crane and Joseph Harrison,
Who tilled the fertile sloping lands below,
And westward from these heights, yoke-fellows true,
In all good works, he found, whose word was bond.
No-e, and Joseph Baldwin, Personette
And Caleb Hetfield—these must added be
To that bright galaxy of worthy names
That grace the opening records of our church.
Mark well the zeal of these devoted men—
Their gifts, their works, their faith, their trustful prayer!
For them the Sabbath was a sacred day,
A day of labor for the cause of Christ.
They met in private houses, anywhere,

In barns, or, weather favoring, in groves,
And, to their gravely reverent souls, the Word
Was like to seed upon the mellowed soil,
Which yields the husbandman an hundredfold.

Their fervor hither drew, from time to time,
Staunch missionary pioneers, who came
And taught, with yearning zeal and fervent speech,
The rudiments of that theology,
Which, rock-like, made their faith's foundation sure.
Sometimes good, worthy Doctor Darby came;
And still from distant fields, whene'er they could,
Came Jedediah Chapman, Jacob Green,
And Joseph Grover—these good pastors all.
And one of saintly memory, who lives
In our affections, and whose noble life
All lustrous gleams in those heroic years,
Was often with our fathers, counselled them,
Inspired their zeal, and wedded them to Christ
By his persuasive eloquence.
James Caldwell, scholar, pastor, patriot, friend,
Was peer to all the bravest of this land!
He loved his God with might, and loved God's gifts,
And, next to God, his country loved he best.
When war's dread clarion startled all the land,
His blended force as soldier, statesman, priest,
In peril's straits, a saving leadership
Became; in liberty's defence, a wall
Of dauntless will no traitor pleas could move.
For liberty and home and God he preached,
He prayed, he fought; and thus to foes he was
But target to their hate. They foully shot
His queenly wife, whilst in her arms his babe
Was nestling. Friends, what sacrifice was here!
He, after, while on mercy's mission sent,
Was basely killed. How dearly Caldwell gave!
His name a crown of honor to our town,
This "Caldwell Church" must ever proudly bear.

Through God-like men, who peril, hardship knew,
Yet never feared, our church to life was called.
The fathers, oft perplexed, worked on with will.
Their unction grew apace—the more increased,
Because endeavor was so girdled round
With keenly felt solicitudes. Their cause, at first,
Seemed hopeless; and, 'tis true, their way was dark,
And would have trended into darkening night,
Had not celestial light illumined hope,
And faith, blest angel that upholds and saves,
Where choice and will work in the grooves of grace,
Inspired their hearts, while patient charity,
Which, from a seeming nothing, something gives,
Transformed their weakness into glowing strength.

In seventeen hundred sixty-five
They toiled and gave of timber, to the end
Of building for themselves an edifice
Devoted to God's worship. All too soon,
Though long delayed their plans! For, now, from out
The East came fretful rumors, dire portents
Of coming storm, which madly broke, ere long,
And whelmed the land in sorrow and in blood.
All enterprise, except in war, stood still.
Fire swept the land; decay and death held sway;
For hope and energy to tented fields had flown.
They who remained at home, as "minute men,"
When not in camp, with ardor worked the soil,
As soldier-farmers, feeding those who fought.
Involved were sacred honor, fortune, peace—
The usufruct of freedom's toil and skill,
God-giv'n, and, except immortal hope,
The all-in-all this earth to mortals yields.
Such good, the noblest guerdon man may gain,
Evoked sublimest purpose, which prevailed
At last, and liberty was won.

The church, meantime, these years of gloom and doubt,
Had lost; yet still, had gained; her spark of life
Not dead, but glowing into brighter flame.
Her offering made to freedom's sacred cause
She'd yielded freely, both her means and men—
In service, Campbell, Gen'ral William Gould,
The Harrisons, the Canfields, and the Cranes.
And with war's close, a score of patriots came;
Josiah Steele and Lane, among these braves,
To whom, for seven long years of war endured,
Is due an honored mention on this page.
The parish grew in numbers and in strength;
Ere long, a parsonage, in dimensions large,
And, for that epoch, in design advanced,
Was building. People flocked to hear the Word;
Truth conquered wish; grace, with her saving might,
Found open hearts, receptive to her gifts;
And faith sublimed in deed the work of grace,
When forty persons, loyal, loving, true,
Enrolled their names, "embodied as a church,"
December third of seventeen eighty-four.
This signal day in our church calendar
Enfolds the triumphs of that steadfast trust,
Which, through the first sad days of penury,
And through the gloom of after years of pain,
Oppression and of war, our fathers led,
To consummate their long design.

To men and women of this noble type,
What honors shall we render? How extol
Their strong, intensive hopes and energies!
To say that it were but their *fear* of God
That moulded hope and shaped their faith and works,
Would be but taunt and insult in the face
Of love they bore the right for Christ's sweet sake.
Nor can we say that their environments
Were virtue's cordon, keeping them from wrong.
There was not dearth of chance for craft and crime.
The laws were few and lax; and, in the midst

Of these true heroes in the cause of right,
There dwelt adventurous and godless men,
Whose crafty vaunts were basest heresies.
These they withstood, nor deemed it worthy praise.
Their lots were cast upon the rocks of need,
And oft the soft impleadings of a voice,
That bated resolution, loading wish
With ill desire, would break the good men's peace.
To such seductive ministries as these
Their hearts were flint. Truth, vitalized by faith,
Saw but the narrow way and followed it.
Saw but the narrow way! No craven fears
Impelled their following; 'twas love of truth,
And love of Christ, and fellow-men; and God,
In kindest mercy, fed the flame of love;
Enkindled from celestial rays, it poured
Its roseate light upon their brightening path.
To Him, who, through that ever sturdy band,
Reveals to us His steadfastness in all
His wise and kind designs for all mankind,—
To God and to His Christ, who blessed our sires,
And vision gave to scan the far-off years,
We render praise this day with grateful hearts!

What happened after,—how the "Old Frame Church"
Was built,—the sacrifices made,—the debt,
How paid,—these were but sequences, the fruits
That ripened on the branches of the tree
Of God's implanting, which strong, pious hands
Had early nourished in this wilderness.
Of these, my time forbids that I should speak.
And still my thought constrains a further word;
This church, as an inheritance, evokes
To life again, emotions, which, within
The deeps of hearts now stilled, were wont to dwell
The quiet joys of trustful piety,
And ecstacies of hope. Then may we say
That now, on this occasion, ages past
Are speaking with these present hours as face

To face, and, in their rich and ripened tones,
In pleadings tenderly enforced, are we
Not called ourselves to heed the ancient ways,
And, deaf to sophistries, rededicate
Our love and service to the King of Kings!

Our Church must gain in influence,—not lose
In prestige, or in moral leadership.
It will not! Christ is with it to the end!
But, friends, in these poor fleeting lives of ours,
How do we, bravely working for the world,
Both lag and grudge in service and in gifts,
Wherein we have embodied highest types
Of duty, whose returns are not for self,
Nor limited in time, nor yet in place,
But which are contributions to the end
Of "Peace on earth; good will to men."
But on our church, in our unthinking moods,
We lay the burden of our blinded hopes,
Expecting walls and furnished pews to teach
The mass of men and lead to grace and God.
The church is heaven's true gift, whose power for good
Is measured by our faith expressed in acts.
If what of Heavenly truth we feel and hope,
Have counterpart in that we say and do,
Then will the church stand forth sublime indeed,
God's power omnipotent to save the lost.

How to the church you look as part of home!
Here have you come to learn the way of life;
Here have you broke your stubborn wills and found,
Within the promises, true treasure stores
Of all that soul can crave—peace, pardon, rest.
Here have you richly gained in chastened hope,
And happily purged the longings of desire;
And when the sombre shade of death has fall'n
Upon your homes, here have you borne your griefs,
And found assuagement in the blessed Word.

Here have your souls to ecstacy been stirred,
By spirit music, pulsing through the sense,
While sweetly, through its soft, rich melody,
Has swelled the glorious anthem of rapt hope,
"I am the resurrection and the life."

As with our fathers, let there be with us,
The unction of an earnest faith in God.
And may the hundred years that are to come,
Be rich, as those now passed, in garnered fruits.

ADDRESS:

CHRISTIAN DUTIES,

BY MR. A. A. RAVEN.

ADDRESS.

IT is common to reserve the best wine for the latter part of the feast, but the order seems to have been reversed on the present occasion. Surely, in the progress of these interesting services we have enjoyed a rich feast, and we might now bring them to a close with entire satisfaction. But inasmuch as I have been asked to say a few words, permit me to suggest one or two thoughts. Your pastor has truly said that, although not a member of this church, I am interested in its welfare; all true Christians should be interested in the church of Christ irrespective of denominational distinctions; because, if the great Head of the Church be indeed the great object and centre of the Christian's affection, the church must also draw out his most ardent love and intense interest, no matter by what name it may be known. As we stand to-day on the dividing line between the past and the future, what memories crowd upon the mind; the comparatively little we have heard of the achievements of the past thrills us and fills us with admiration for those noble and heroic men who have gone before us; how forcibly they appeal to us, and were it possible to have presented to us even in part, their sufferings, their self-denial, their spirit of consecration and devotion in their Master's service, it would be an incentive to us to greater activity and more earnest effort in carrying on the work they so nobly commenced a century ago. That they suffered much and were devoted men we cannot doubt, for the records abundantly testify. There is one feature of their work that is specially worthy of notice. They laid foundations deeper and wider

than they conceived; and is it not ever so with God's children? Every effort sincerely made in the Master's name, every sacrifice for the furtherance of His kingdom, no matter how feeble and small in the inception, will assuredly be followed by His blessing, and be productive of far greater results than the most sanguine could possibly anticipate; indeed, it is one of the grandest characteristics of our Divine Sovereign, be it reverently said, that He specially selects the humblest means, and apparently the most unattractive agencies through which to display the most signal evidences of His favor. In grace as well as in nature and providence the beginnings are often small indeed, even as a grain of mustard seed, but who can determine the possibilities of such beginnings? The Psalmist recognized this when he said, "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength."

In the fourth chapter of Zechariah the prophet recounts his interview with the angel who was designated to communicate with him in respect to the rebuilding of the Temple by Zerubbabel. In the figure of a golden candlestick with a bowl upon the top of it and seven lamps thereon, and two olive trees by it, one on either side, distilling the oil into the bowl to feed the lamps, the prophet is represented as being taught by questions and answers, that notwithstanding the skill, energy and persevering efforts of Zerubbabel and the means at his command, the great work he had commenced could be brought to a successful termination only by the aid of the Spirit of God, for "It is not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit saith the Lord of hosts." Zerubbabel was thus encouraged not to trust in the arm of flesh but in the Spirit of Jehovah as manifested in the providential ordering of the world; and this important lesson should be forcibly brought home to our own hearts to-day.

If we become, as we really should be, the temples of the Holy Ghost, there can be no doubt of the success of this church and of the great things to be accomplished by it in the future; no obstacles, however great, will impede your on-

ward course. Irresistibly will you go on conquering and to conquer. Can you for a moment doubt the effect of your united effort if every member of this church were possessed with the spirit of consecration and actuated by the spirit of the living God? Would you not, under the leadership of your pastor, seeing eye to eye and having but one aim, show forth the power of the truth so that this whole community would be transformed? Your own souls would be aglow with the warmth of His love and its benign influence will be extended to all with whom you are brought in contact.

Even the humblest and the most despised may take c urage in the assurances that God gives us, as the apostle saith, "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty." If therefore, my brother, you deem yourself weak and devoid of influence you little know what God designs you to accomplish. Seek the aid of His spirit and it will be revealed to you; and in the measure in which you realize your own weakness His omnipotent strength will be yours, for you will feel as the great apostle felt, "when you are weak then are you strong." We have not been placed here by chance. Every one has been assigned his and her place, hence the duty devolving upon us is to perform here the work specially assigned to us in the sphere in which we are placed. There is a tradition in connection with the building of Solomon's Temple which I think forcibly illustrates this truth. It will be remembered that all the stones were specially prepared and made ready before, so that there was no sound of hammer nor ax nor any tool of iron heard in the house while it was in building, but every stone was brought and fitted in its place noiselessly. The place designed for one of the stones thus brought could not be discovered, every effort failed to determine the position for which it was specially designed, and finally the stone was rejected and placed among the rubbish of the temple. On the near completion of the building the workmen announced that one

stone was missing; direction was given to make diligent search for it, but it could not be found. At length on looking through the rubbish of the building a stone was seen all covered with dirt, and upon its being taken out, cleaned and raised to the vacant place it was found to be the missing stone, designed as the head stone, and when placed in position the exultant exclamation went forth, "The stone which the builders rejected is become the head stone of the corner."

You may even be despised and rejected of men, but quietly and patiently wait until the opportunity occurs and your place will be assigned. If you are indeed the Lord's, He has his eye upon you. In view therefore of the great and signal mercies we have experienced, let us on this centennial occasion reconsecrate ourselves to His service and do our part in making the future fruitful of even greater results than the past has been. I close with the admonition of the apostle, "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable with God, which is your reasonable service."

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